

Clinton Courthouse,  
East Feliciana Parish,  
Louisiana

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Louisiana

COURTHOUSE AT CLINTON

Clinton

East Feliciana Parish

Louisiana

Owner: East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana

Date of Erection: Finished in 1841

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Present Condition: Good; remodeled by Works Progress Administration in 1936.

Number of Stories: Two

Materials of Construction: Brick, cemented. Two-story colonnade; hipped slate roof surmounted by octagonal cupola.

Other existing Records:

East Feliciana, Past and Present - Prof. H. Skipworth;  
Hopkins Printery Co., 1892, pg. 38

Old Louisiana, Lyle Saxon, - Century Company,  
New York and London, 1929

Additional Data:

In the architectural history of Louisiana, East Feliciana has been known for its work of the Classical Revival and in Clinton we find the beginning of a small civic center, an idea which must have been common, for we see its reflection again in Homer, but unfortunately there it has been spoiled by later alterations.

In Clinton the large square bordered by oaks is surrounded by the small, low buildings of a country town and in its center stands the courthouse, a conventional Greek Doric building.

On one side of this square a row of buildings reflects the note of the Courthouse. As we sit on the wooden bench of the country store opposite, our imagination goes back to the Greece and Rome that some unknown architect of the 1840's was inspired to bring to Clinton. We see a square building with a portico of free standing Doric columns, eight facing on each of its four sides. It is dominated by a large eight sided lantern which rises from a square base, at the top of the pitch of the blue slate roof. This lantern, or belvidere, is covered with a half dome, now brightly gilded and its openings are filled with ventilators.

The plan is simple: At the end of a T-shaped corridor is a double stair which gives access to the large, bare court room of the second floor. The public seats are slightly raised and divided from the court by a small railing. The Judge's stand is a small dais and seems quite insignificant in the large room. Two small jury rooms fill out the end of the stair hall.

The exterior walls and columns are of brick, plastered and white washed; the interior is of stud construction, plastered and painted white. The trusses of the roof are well designed and pegged together as was then common practice.

The measurements made by the Survey were taken from the scaffolding built by the Works Progress Administration that recently repaired the building and, appreciating the old landmark, only replaced defective parts.

To the west of the Courthouse is a small frame building of no particular merit that may date from the time of the

earlier courthouse. The present structure was built in 1841, on the site of this earlier building which was destroyed by fire in 1832. The original building was erected in 1826 on property deeded to the Parish by James Holmes and Susan Bostwick.

Among the courthouse records we find the following document:

A DONATION OF HOLMES & BOSTWICK

Recorded in Conveyance Book known as "Donation Book A",  
Fols. 1-2, Dated July 20, 1825

On the fourteenth of January, 1825, before me, Jno. C. White, an acting justice in and for the Parish of East Feliciana, came and appeared James Holmes, and Susan Bostwick, the said Susan Bostwick being the wife of John Bostwick, who signs, giving his consent to this donation, of the one part, and Thos. A. Scott, Judge of the Parish of East Feliciana, of the second part, and the same Holmes and Bostwick declared and acknowledged that, for the purpose of establishing the Seat of Justice for the Parish of East Feliciana on their land on the corner, they do give, grant, etc., to the Parish of East Feliciana the following described parcels of land, as follows: "One square of land measuring 300 ft. square, known as Square No. 1. Also a lot of ground in Square 22, measuring 75 ft. square; also one other lot of ground measuring 214 feet and 6 in. by 198 ft. for building the Courthouse, a house for the offices of Parish Judge and Clerk of the Court."

April 6, 1937

APPROVED:

*Richard Koch*  
Richard Koch, District  
Officer, HABS in Louisiana